Supporting Online Material for

The Surprising Power of Neighborly Advice

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This PDF file includes

Materials and Methods
SOM Text
Figs. S1 and S2
MATERIALS & METHODS

Experiment 1: Speed Dating

Participants were given course credit for their participation.

The male Participant reported to a different room than did the female participants to eliminate the possibility that they would meet prior to the experiment.

After the experiment, female participants were asked whether they had ever met the male participant before (on a 4 point scale where 1 = “Friends”, 2 = “Acquainted”, 3 = “Seen Around”, 4 = “Never Noticed”) and whether they had seen the male participant in the waiting area that day before the experiment began (on a 3-point scale where 1 = “Yes, and I thought he was involved in the study”, 2 = “Yes, but I didn't think he was involved in the study”, 3 = “No”). Only one female participant reported that she and the male participant were friends, and she also indicated that they had discussed the experiment before it began. Because their friendship and discussion could conceivably have influenced the male participant’s subsequent interaction with other female participants, we excluded all the data from the 5 participants in this session. Thus, 8 men and 33 women were included in the analyses.

- Two female participants reported being acquainted with the male participant but also reported that they had not seen him in the waiting area before the experiment began. In other words, these two female participants did not know the identity of the male participant when they made predictions. Excluding the data from these two participants had no significant influence on any of the analyses reported and thus their data were retained.

- Female participants were also asked whether they had seen any of the other female participants in the waiting area before the experiment began, and if so, whether they had ever met that female participant. Thirteen of the 25 female participants reported that they had seen another female participant in the waiting area before the experiment began, but none reported having met one of them before. Whether or not a female participant saw another female participant in the waiting area was unrelated to her prediction accuracy: \( t(23) = .121, p = .905 \) across conditions.

During the speed date, the man and woman were instructed to talk about anything they wished other than the experiment itself.
After the speed date, the second woman also reported how much she liked the man, how much she wanted to befriend the man, and how much she wanted to have a romantic relationship with the man. She made these reports by marking three continuous 100 mm scales whose endpoints were labeled *not at all* and *very much*.

The 2\textsuperscript{nd} woman in each session was randomly assigned to receive surrogation or simulation information. If the 2\textsuperscript{nd} woman was randomly assigned to receive simulation information, then the 3\textsuperscript{rd} woman received surrogation information (by being shown the affective report of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} woman), the 4\textsuperscript{th} woman received simulation information, the 5\textsuperscript{th} woman received surrogation information (by being shown the affective report of the 4\textsuperscript{th} woman), and so on. If the 2\textsuperscript{nd} woman was randomly assigned to receive surrogation information (by being shown the affective report of the 1\textsuperscript{st} woman), then the 3\textsuperscript{rd} woman received simulation information, the 4\textsuperscript{th} woman received surrogation information (by being shown the affective report of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} woman), and so on.

**Experiment 2: Peer Evaluation**

**Part 1: Method for Surrogates**

Participants were recruited through the Harvard University Department of Psychology Study Pool and who were paid $7 for their participation.

Surrogates first provided a baseline measure of their current feelings by marking a continuous 100 mm scale whose endpoints were labeled *very bad* and *very good*.

The complete description of the Type A personality was as follows: “In addition to being extraordinarily well-rounded, these people have exceptional qualities that often lead others to refer to them as gifted. Although these people generally get along well with others, they occasionally find themselves bored by those who do not share their gifts. These people are rarely resented for their obvious superiority; others usually admire them. These people tend to excel in professional occupations that require exceptional creativity or analytic thinking. They are rather selective in their personal relationships, but the few they foster tend to be lifelong.”
Their romantic relationships also tend to endure. Divorce rates are below the national average in this group. When long-term relationships end it is almost always because these people have found a more suitable and rewarding alternative. These people tend to have a realistic picture of their own talents, though they occasionally underestimate themselves and may be capable of even greater achievements than they realize."

The complete description of the Type B personality was as follows: “These people are particularly competent and well-adjusted and, although they are average in many respects, they almost always have one or more ‘remarkable’ qualities such as an artistic or athletic talent, high intelligence, or good social skills. These people generally get along well with others and tend to be put in leadership positions, though occasionally others may feel jealous or threatened by them. They tend to be successful in a wide variety of careers, but especially in professional occupations that require special skills and high levels of dedication. They seek both fulfillment and excitement in their personal relationships, and their romantic relationships are usually successful as long as they are with partners who do not share their ‘remarkable’ quality. Divorce rates tend to be below the national average in this group, and when long-term relationships do end it is usually by mutual consent. On some occasions, these people overestimate their own ability and may take on more than they can handle, but they tend to deal with stress well and tend not to repeat the same mistake twice.”

The complete description of the Type C personality was as follows: “These people are fairly competent and well-adjusted but have few qualities that distinguish them from others. They are generally well-liked, partly because they do not pose a threat to the competencies of others. These people tend to succeed in a wide variety of careers but, because of their ability to get along well with others, mostly excel in jobs requiring them to be part of a team rather than take on individual responsibilities. In their personal relationships, they will sacrifice their beliefs because they seek contentment rather than challenge or excitement. Their romantic relationships are fairly successful as long as they are with a person of the same type. Divorce rates do not differ substantially from the national average in this group and when long-term relationships end it is usually because the person's partner has found a more suitable alternative. These people tend to have a realistic picture of both their talents and their limitations and thus tend to structure
their tasks quite appropriately.”

After reading the descriptions of the three personality types but before writing their stories, surrogates were asked to predict how they would feel 10 minutes after being classified as each of the three types. They made these affective forecasts by marking three continuous 100mm scales whose endpoints were labeled very bad and very good. Next, surrogates reported how well they thought each type described them by marking three continuous 126 mm scales whose endpoints were labeled not at all and very well. Next, surrogates indicated which of the three personality types best described them.

Part 2: Method for Forecasters

Participants were recruited through the Harvard University Department of Psychology Study Pool and who were paid $7 for their participation.

After making forecasts and reading the descriptions of the three personality types, forecasters reported how well they thought each type described them by marking three continuous 126 mm scales whose endpoints were labeled not at all and very well. Forecasters then indicated which of the three types best described them.

Part 3: Method for Judges

Participants were recruited through the Harvard University Department of Psychology Study Pool and paid $5 for their participation.

Judges were randomly paired with a particular participant from Part 1 and were asked to rank three pieces of information based on how useful they thought each type would be in helping them estimate that participant’s affective report after the participant was classified as a Type C. The three pieces of information were (a) complete descriptions of each of the three personality types (simulation information), (b) the affective report of another randomly selected participant
who had been classified as a Type C (surrogation information), and (c) the participant’s report of how he or she felt before the study began (baseline information).

**ADDITIONAL RESULTS**

**Experiment 1: Speed Dating**

As Figures 2a and 2b suggest, women in the simulation and surrogation conditions made different predictions ($M_{\text{simulation}} = 45.31 \text{ mm, SD} = 16.28 \text{ mm, } M_{\text{surrogation}} = 65.58 \text{ mm, SD} = 25.40 \text{ mm}$), $t(23) = 2.34, p = .025$, but did not have different experiences, ($M_{\text{simulation}} = 62.46 \text{ mm, SD} = 17.56 \text{ mm, } M_{\text{surrogation}} = 71.84 \text{ mm, SD} = 20.75 \text{ mm}$), $t(23) = 1.22, p = .234$.

Seventy five percent of the women believed that simulation information would have allowed them to make a more accurate forecast about the date they experienced, This number was greater than the indifference level of 50%, $\chi^2(n=24) = 6.0, p = .014$, and did not differ across conditions (83% in the simulation condition and 67% in the surrogation condition, $\chi^2(n=24) = .889, p = .346$). Eighty four percent of the women believed that simulation information would allow them to make a more accurate forecast about a future date with a different man. This number was also greater than the indifference level of 50%, $\chi^2(n=25) = 11.56, p < .001$, and did not differ across conditions (85% in the simulation condition and 83% in the surrogation condition, $\chi^2(n=25) = .008, p = .930$). There were no differences between women in the simulation and surrogation conditions in terms how much they liked the man ($M_{\text{simulation}} = 66.3 \text{ mm, SD} = 19.96 \text{ mm, } M_{\text{surrogation}} = 76.42 \text{ mm, SD} = 15.89 \text{ mm}$, $t(23) = 1.39, p = .177$), wanted to befriend the man ($M_{\text{simulation}} = 64.00 \text{ mm, SD} = 27.64 \text{ mm, } M_{\text{surrogation}} = 80.50 \text{ mm, SD} = 17.52 \text{ mm}$, $t(23) = 1.76, p = .091$), or wanted to have a romantic relationship with the man ($M_{\text{simulation}} = 33.15 \text{ mm, SD} = 28.16 \text{ mm, } M_{\text{surrogation}} = 40.42 \text{ mm, SD} = 25.30 \text{ mm}$, $t(23) < 1, p = .506$).
Experiment 2: Peer Evaluation

Part 1: Results for Surrogates

Two participants who did not complete all measures and one who classified herself as Type C and thus did not consider the feedback to be negative were removed from the data set, leaving 14 women and 8 men.

Although the main purpose of Part 1 was to collect affective reports from surrogates for use in Part 2 of the experiment, the data they provided also allowed us to assess the accuracy of their affective forecasts. We calculated the affective forecasting error for each participant by taking the absolute value of the difference between each participant’s affective forecast and affective report. The average affective forecasting error was 22.9 (SD = 14.1).

Part 2: Results for Forecasters

Three men and 3 women were excluded from the analysis because they classified themselves as Type C, leaving 60 women and 28 men in the data set.

As Figures 2a and 2b suggest, participants in the surrogation and simulation conditions made different predictions ($M_{\text{simulation}} = 32.95$ mm, SD = 21.79 mm, $M_{\text{surrogation}} = 51.91$ mm, SD = 15.50 mm), $t(86) = 4.70, p < .001$. Participants in these conditions also reported different experiences ($M_{\text{simulation}} = 63.34$ mm, SD = 20.89 mm, $M_{\text{surrogation}} = 54.14$ mm, SD = 18.68 mm), $t(86) = 2.18, p = .032$. A linear regression that used Affective Forecasting Error as the outcome variable and Affective Report and Experimental Condition as predictor variables revealed an effect of Experimental Condition even when Affective Report was included in the model, $t(85) = 4.839, p < .001$. In other words, when the difference in experience between conditions was statistically held constant, the difference in Affective Forecasting Error between conditions remained highly significant, indicating that the difference in affective forecasting error between conditions did not depend on the difference in experience between conditions.
Part 3: Results for Judges

Judges believed that simulation information would be more useful (mean rank = 1.45, SD = .694) than either surrogation information (mean rank = 2.1, SD = .718), $t(61) = 4.18, p < .001$) or baseline information (mean rank = 2.45, SD = .717), $t(61) = 6.48, p < .001$. 
Figure S1a: Affective forecasts (prediction) and affective reports (experience) for each participant in the simulation condition of Experiment 1
Figure S1b: Affective forecasts (prediction) and affective reports (experience) for each participant in the surrogation condition of Experiment 1
Figure S2a: Affective forecasts (prediction) and affective reports (experience) for each participant in the simulation condition of Experiment 2
Figure S2b: Affective forecasts (prediction) and affective reports (experience) for each participant in the surrogation condition of Experiment 2